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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 014097

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/14/2019

TAGS: PREL PARM EAID NATO AF PK

SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN/PAKISTAN POLICY REVIEW

CLASSIFIED BY: DONALD A. CAMP, ACTING, BY
REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

¶1. (C) Summary: The Administration has begun a comprehensive review of U.S. national security interests and strategy in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The aim is to assess fundamentally our policy goals with a view to strengthening our approach where necessary to achieve our goals. We will determine USG policy directions and requirements in advance of the President's travel to Europe for the April 3-4 NATO Summit. At your discretion, Ambassadors should find opportunities to engage host governments at a senior level to explain the Administration's plans for this review process and invite their reactions and suggestions as early as possible in our review process. End Summary.

¶2. (C) Background: President Obama has announced his intention to conduct a comprehensive re-evaluation of U.S. national security policy and strategy towards Afghanistan and Pakistan. The President has made clear that he views the international effort in Afghanistan and Pakistan as a single theater of immense strategic importance to the security of the West. We also recognize that our effort in both countries must focus on governance and development aspects as well as security. In those areas especially we look forward to working closely with our partners. Accordingly, the President has directed that the National Security Council produce a high-level policy review with input from all relevant agencies. On February 10, the NSC convened an initial planning meeting to begin work immediately. The aim is to assess our fundamental policy goals and approach towards the serious strategic challenges confronting us in the region.

¶3. (C) The President announced this review on February

¶10. He has asked Bruce Riedel to chair. Special Representative for Pakistan and Afghanistan Richard Holbrooke and Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Michele Flournoy will serve as co-chairs. This review will be completed well in advance of the April 3-4 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) 60th Anniversary Summit.

¶14. (C) The review will draw upon recently-completed reviews done by the NSC staff, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and CENTCOM. It will cover the range of U.S. policy concerns with regard to the Afghanistan and Pakistan region, including political/diplomatic strategy; military issues; development and strategic resource requirements; as well as issues of internal governance and legitimacy, regional cooperation and international strategy and coordination. End Background.

¶15. (C) This administration is committed to working with our allies, partners and friends. We realize that to get the support of others, we need to listen to and include their views. We have already agreed to work with Afghanistan and Pakistan to get their views.

¶16. (C) Action Request: Ambassador is requested to brief senior-level host government officials on the U.S. policy review, and invite appropriate input. In light of the accelerated timetable outlined above, initial comments or suggestions from partner countries will be most helpful if received very soon. In approaching host governments, Ambassadors should draw on the themes outlined in paragraph 7.

¶17. (SBU) Suggested themes for engaging with host governments:

- President Obama is intent on re-evaluating U.S. national security policy and strategy towards Afghanistan and Pakistan.
- We seek a comprehensive approach addressing our national goals of stability and security for that region.
- We and the international community have expressed our strong commitment to working with our regional partners to build peace, stability and economic opportunities to Afghanistan and Pakistan. We maintain those commitments.
- The senior-level review process will produce a comprehensive, interagency reassessment of our approach to the serious strategic challenges confronting us in the region.
- The National Security Council will coordinate the policy review, which will begin immediately.
- The President has asked that the review be given highest priority and be put on an accelerated timetable well in advance of the April 3-4 NATO Summit.
- The review will provide an opportunity to adjust our strategy in concrete ways to better assist the Afghans and the Pakistanis to build their governance and security capacities. The review intends to make sure that our goals are clear and that we have the resources to achieve them.
- We look forward to discussing our policy review and consulting with our allies and friends in the run up to the April NATO Summit.
- As we proceed with our review we would welcome your considered views on:
 - Goals we should collectively seek with regard to

- Afghanistan and Pakistan,
- Priorities we should set,
- Strategies for achieving those priorities,
- Actions that we need to take, and
- Resources we will need.

¶ 8. (U) Posts' assistance is greatly appreciated.

CLINTON